GENESIS TO REVELATION | PARABLE

The Tiny Mustard Seed

Matthew 13:31-32



YOUR BIBLE READING

Jesus pictured God's kingdom growing from a very small beginning.

Inside: two extended reading pages, a thoughtful reflection, creative activities and a grown-up guide.

AGES 6-10 WITH AN ADULT • 6 COLORFUL A4 PAGES • ENGLISH ONLY

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 1 OF 2

A Small Beginning in Jesus' Story

Matthew 13:31-32



Jesus told a short parable about the kingdom of heaven. He compared it with a mustard seed that a man took and planted in his field. A parable uses a recognizable picture to help people think about something greater. Here the picture began with a seed so small that its size could be easy to notice before anything else about it. Yet the seed's beginning was not its whole story.

The man planted it. Jesus did not describe the tools he used, the date he sowed it, or the daily work that followed. The action he named was simple: a small seed was put into the field. To understand the comparison, the listener needed to look beyond that first small thing and consider the plant that would come from it. The story moves from a beginning toward what it becomes.

When grown, the mustard plant was larger than the garden herbs and became tree-like, with branches. Jesus' listeners were invited to hold both sizes in mind: the tiny seed and the much larger growth. His point was a contrast within this familiar picture, not a lesson requiring a child to rank every kind of seed in the world. What seemed small at first could not be judged by that size alone.

Then birds came and settled in its branches. The picture now held more than a planted seed or a large plant by itself. Living creatures could find a place there. In just a few lines, Jesus had moved from something tiny enough to plant to branches that could receive birds. He offered that surprising change as a way of thinking about the kingdom of heaven.

Remember: A small beginning can hold room for surprising growth.

EXTENDED ENGLISH READING • PAGE 2 OF 2

Read Deeper: Branches beyond the Beginning

Matthew 13:31-32



The kingdom of heaven means God's good rule, and Jesus often taught about it with ordinary pictures. This parable asks us to notice the difference between how a thing begins and what it can become. The seed's smallness is real, but it is not the last fact. The grown plant and the birds keep the listener from stopping the story at the first small object placed in the field.

The branches matter as well as the height. Growth in the parable makes room for birds to settle. We should not invent a separate secret meaning for every leaf or every bird, because Jesus did not explain one here. We can still notice the whole picture: a small beginning becomes something with a reach beyond itself. The kingdom he spoke about could surprise people whose attention stayed only on its beginning.

Here is an ordinary example to help think about small starts, not an extra event from the Bible. A child and an adult might begin a shared garden with one pot. The work can teach them to notice water, light, patience, and living things. The pot might remain one pot, and that can still be worthwhile. Smallness does not make an act of care useless, even when it never becomes impressive.

Jesus' parable is not a promise that every project will become huge or that every plan must keep getting bigger. Its main subject is God's kingdom. When we read it, we are invited to leave room for God's work to exceed a first impression. The little seed, the growing plant, and the branches full of life together give us a picture of that surprising reach.

Pause and think: What small beginning might deserve patient attention even before you can see what it will become?

THINK, NOTICE & GROW

Look Carefully at Small Beginnings



What small things do you pass without noticing? A seed, a beginning reader's effort, or one person offering help can seem unimportant beside something large. Try looking again. You do not have to pretend that small and large are the same. You can simply remember that a beginning may contain possibilities you cannot see all at once from its size.

The birds make the picture welcoming. As you think about your own group, ask what makes room for others: a spare chair, an explanation of the rules, or a patient pause. These are ordinary examples of care, not a claim that you can create God's kingdom by yourself. They help us notice that good growth can be measured partly by the life it supports.

Patience belongs beside hope. Plants do not grow faster because someone keeps pulling at them, and learning is not always quick either. With an adult, choose one small practice worth continuing, such as caring for a plant or reading together. Notice progress without demanding a spectacular result. A small faithful action can matter while it is still small.

A SMALL STEP FOR TODAY

Jesus pictured the surprising reach of God's kingdom through a tiny seed and its spreading branches.

What small beginning might deserve patient attention even before you can see what it will become?

Read, Remember & Create

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Think about the reading

1. What small thing did Jesus describe?

_____

2. Who came to the grown plant's branches?

_____

2 Put the ideas in order

Write 1, 2 and 3 for the order these ideas appear in the reading.

- ☐ It grew into a large plant with branches.
- ☐ Birds came to live among its branches.
- ☐ A man planted a tiny mustard seed.

3 Draw a meaningful picture

Draw a tiny seed beside a large mustard plant with birds in its branches.

Tell someone how your picture connects to the reading.

Read & Grow Together

Read and learn with context

This English edition is designed for ages 6-10 with an adult. Read both extended readings together, or enjoy one each day. Pause at unfamiliar words, invite questions and use the reflection page to connect the story with everyday life. These are retellings and lessons with explanations; read the listed Bible passage for context. Poetry, parables, letters and symbolic visions are identified by type.

Remember this

A small beginning can hold room for surprising growth.
Original memory thought, not a direct Bible quotation. Related passage: Matthew 13:31-32

A thoughtful conversation

Jesus uses a familiar farming comparison, not a modern botanical ranking of every seed species. The parable concerns God's kingdom; it does not guarantee that every small project becomes large.

Activity answers

1. A mustard seed.
2. Birds came and made their homes there.
Sequence boxes, top to bottom: 2, 3, 1. Personal responses and drawings will vary.

Optional prayer

If you wish: God, help me value small beginnings and welcome what grows through your kingdom.

Print and share

Each pack has 6 pages. Print on A4 at Actual Size (100%). The worksheet is page 5. You may print just that page, or use the separate 150-page activity book. The collection contains 150 packs in Bible book order, 15 volumes and one ZIP. Catalog pack IDs stay the same when new readings are added.

Sources and sharing

English retellings, lessons, reflections and activities by DigiPick (2026), based on Matthew 13:31-32. Source checked with the public-domain World English Bible. Illustration © Sweet Publishing; 40_Mt_13_13_RG.jpg. CC BY-SA 3.0. Source: unfoldingWord. Resized proportionally, without cropping.
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